

March 2001

The Initial F-22 Operational Wing Beddown Proposal

The U.S. Congress determined the need to provide the U.S. Air Force with a next-generation fighter to replace and supplement the aging F-15C fleet and to ensure air dominance well into the 21st Century.

- The proposed action is to establish (beddown) the first Operational Wing of F-22 fighter aircraft at Langley AFB in Virginia.
- There are four alternative locations for the Initial F-22 Operational Wing beddown:
 - Eglin AFB, Florida
 - Elmendorf AFB, Alaska
 - Mountain Home AFB, Idaho
 - Tyndall AFB, Florida
- The beddown would involve basing 72 primary F-22 aircraft.
- The beddown would require no changes to current military airspace boundaries.

What's Inside this Newsletter?

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 Act
- How Resources Are Analyzed in the Draft EIS
- The Importance of Public Involvement
- Reviewing and Commenting on the Draft EIS
- The Public Hearings
- Where to Find the Draft EIS

Keeping You Informed and Involved

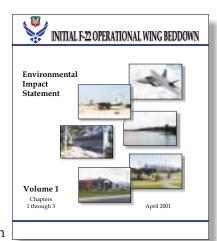
This newsletter has been prepared to keep you informed about the Initial F-22 Operational Wing Beddown Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS will provide the Air Force with an understanding of the potential environmental consequences associated with the beddown of the first Operational Wing of 72 F-22 fighter aircraft. The Draft EIS will be distributed in late April 2001.

The first newsletter sent in January discussed the contents of the Draft EIS, the results of scoping, and several of the primary concerns expressed during the scoping process. This newsletter describes the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the timeline, the approach taken for resource analysis in the Draft EIS, the public hearings, and how to comment on the Draft EIS.

The National Environmental Policy Act Process

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, directs federal agencies to consider environmental factors in their decisions and guides the preparation of the EIS. NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations require federal agencies to

- consider all appropriate environmental factors when making decisions;
- involve the potentially affected and interested public (individuals, interest groups, tribal governments, and local, state, and federal agencies) early in the environmental analysis process;
- assess reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that will avoid or minimize adverse affects on the quality of the natural and human environment.



• write environmental documents in plain language for the benefit of the public and the decision maker.

Continued on page 2.



Continued from page 1.

In addition to complying with the guidelines described on page 1, the Air Force further adheres to the stringent requirements of its own environmental impact analysis process. This ensures that, when the Air Force undertakes a major action, decision makers will be provided the appropriate level of environmental analysis, such as will be contained in the Draft EIS for the Initial F-22 Operational Wing Beddown.

Studying the Resources

NEPA requires focused analyses of the areas and resources, such as airspace or socioeconomics, that are potentially affected by the proposed action and a no-action alternative. An EIS also should consider, but not analyze in detail, those areas or resources not potentially affected. In so doing, an EIS should not be encyclopedic. These overarching NEPA principles guided the focus on environmental resource analysis in the Draft EIS. To define the affected area and environmental resources, the Air Force obtained inputs through the scoping process and

- identified the types and location of all elements (such as construction and flight operations) involved in the proposed action and each of the four alternatives;
- determined the possible interaction of these elements with the resources in potentially affected locations;
- correlated the issues raised in scoping to the potentially affected locations and resources; and
- assessed whether, how, and to what degree the resources may be affected

Combined, the affected areas and affected resources comprise the affected environment for the proposed action and four basing alternatives. Seventeen environmental resource categories were placed into five resource groups and evaluated in the Draft EIS.

The Draft EIS also analyzes a no-action alternative, where no beddown of the Initial F-22 Operational Wing would occur at one of the proposed bases at this time.

No-action is, in fact, a continuation of ongoing base activities and provides a baseline from which to identify potential environmental consequences when compared with the proposed action or other alternatives.

In addition, the Draft EIS evaluates cumulative effects and irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources.











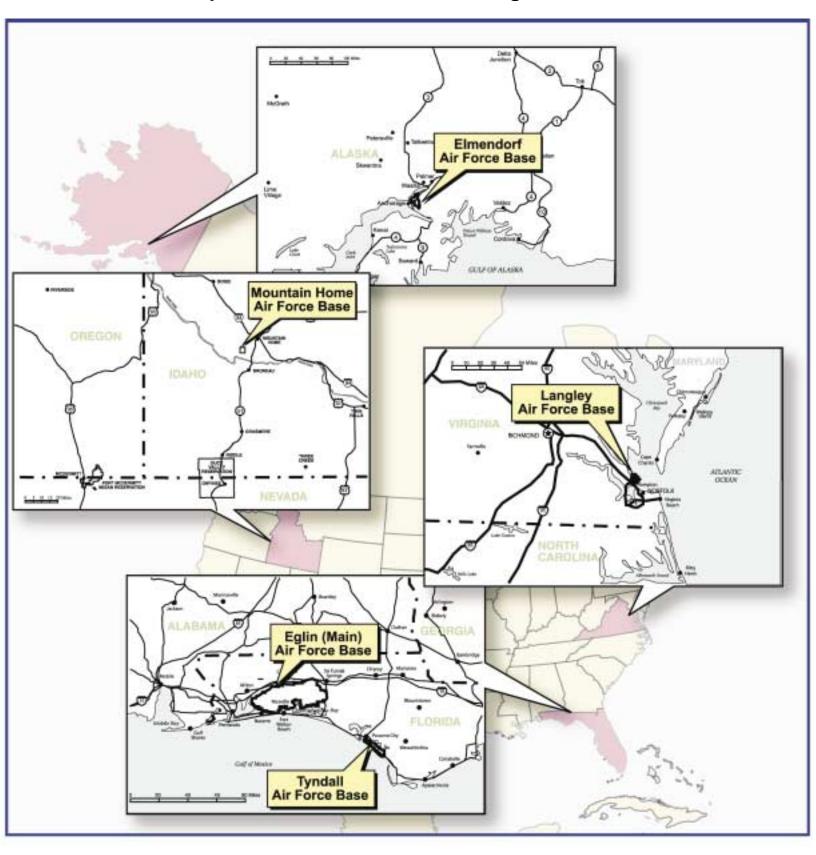




Tyndall AFB is on a peninsula with extensive wetlands, waterways,



Proposed Action and Four Basing Alternatives





Your Involvement is important

The environmental impact analysis process provides numerous opportunities for public input and involvement. Many of you who are receiving this newsletter are on the



mailing list because you attended one or more scoping meetings and/or submitted comments during the scoping phase. At that point, you became part of the process and we appreciate your involvement.

This environmental process began when the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for the Initial F-22 Operational Wing Beddown was published in the *Federal Register* on March 3, 2000. Important events that have been completed or will occur include:

- five Phase-One scoping meetings held in March and April 2000 - one meeting in a community near each of the proposed basing locations;
- twenty-eight Phase-Two scoping meetings held from June to November 2000 to gather community-specific information regarding the proposed beddown;
- distribution of the Initial F-22 Operational Wing Beddown Draft EIS in late April 2001;
- public hearings, currently being planned for May 2001;
- distribution of the Final EIS; and
- announcement of the Air Force's Record of Decision.

The goal of the comment period and associated public

hearings is to give you an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS. This input could address any inconsistencies and correct any mistakes you might have found in the document. These comments will then



become part of the official record included in the Final EIS. Your comments will ensure that the Air Force decision makers benefit from your knowledge and are aware of your concerns about the environmental analysis for this Draft EIS. Comments can be provided in various ways.

1. You can submit written comments anytime during the public review/comment period, which begins April 27, 2001 (the day the Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS appears in the *Federal Register*) and ends on June 10, 2001 (a 45-day period). Your written comments should be sent to:

Ms. Brenda Cook, F-22 EIS Project Manager HQ ACC/CEVP 129 Andrews Street, Suite 102 Langley AFB, VA 23665-2769

2. You can attend one of the 23 public hearings (see page 6 for the schedule) where you will be able to provide oral and/or written comments.

<u>Please note</u>: Comments will be published in the Final EIS. Please do not include your personal information (such as addresses or phone numbers) if you would object to having it printed in the Final EIS. Providing this information will be considered consent to publish it.

Reviewing and Commenting on the Draft EIS

Many of you requested a hard copy or CD (compact disc) of the Draft EIS, which will be mailed soon. Once you receive the document (a two-volume set), you can become part of the review team. How can you be an effective review team member? That's easy - by reading the Draft EIS, by attending one of the public hearings, and/or by expressing your thoughts about the Draft EIS through written comments.

Does the Air Force Read All the Comments It Receives?

Yes. Your comments are important and the Air Force reads all of them; however, the more effective comments are those that directly relate and are specific to the contents and analyses presented in the Draft EIS. Here are some tips on how to make your comments more useful and effective.



Be specific. It is most helpful to state particular reasons for your concerns instead of making broad statements. An example of this type of statement is, "that alternative is not viable." While you may believe that the alternative is not a good one, this comment is too vague for us to understand why you believe the alternative would not work.

| | en Comment Sheet tial F-22 Operational Wing Beddown EIS |
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| Thank you for your input | DATE: |
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| **** CONTINUE | ON BACK FOR MORE SPACE **** |
| | Please do not include your personal information (such as addresses and in the Final EIS. Providing this information will be considered consent to |
| NAME: | |
| ORGANIZATION: | |
| ADDRESS: | |
| CITY/STATE/ZIP: | |
| Yes, include my name and address on the mailing Beddown EIS. | g list so I can receive information on the Initial F-22 Operational Wing |
| Only put my name on the mailing list. I understated Beddown EIS. | and I won't receive information on the Initial F-22 Operational Wing |
| ☐ Do not include my name and address on the mail | ing list. |
| Please hand this fo | orm in or MAIL BEFORE June 10, 2001 to: |
| 129 Ar Langle | HQ ACC/CEVP adrews Street, Suite 102 zy AFB, VA 22665-2769 nr. Ms. Brenda Cook |

- Focus your comments. If you are concerned about a particular issue or resource, please provide as much detail as possible. For example, if you are concerned about biological resources, describing the specific animal, plant, or habitat can help us to better understand your particular concern. A general comment such as "the Draft EIS did not adequately study biological resources" is too broad. The more specific or to the point you are, the better we will be able to respond to or address your concerns in the Final EIS.
- Prepare. Another way to make your comments more
 effective is to spend time preparing. Organize and outline
 your thoughts before getting to the public hearing. There's
 nothing wrong with having note cards or reading from
 text when giving oral testimony. It will help you stay on
 track and focused even experienced speakers get
 flustered sometimes.

What Is a Public Hearing?

A public hearing is a meeting where you are given the opportunity to publicly voice your comments on the Draft EIS. When you arrive at the hearing, you will be asked to fill out an attendance/speaker card and check the appropriate box if you want to provide oral testimony. The Air Force presentation and all your oral comments will be recorded by a court reporter or tape recorder and placed into the official transcript of the hearings, along with all written comments

received during the hearings and comment period. Each person wishing to provide oral testimony will be given a time allotment so everyone will have an opportunity to speak. If time allows, and all speakers have been heard, you may be given an opportunity to expand on your remarks at the end of the hearing. However, the hearing will end when all speakers have had a least one opportunity to speak.

Again, please do not include in your oral comments any personal information (such as home addresses or phone numbers) if you would object to having it printed in the Final EIS. Providing this information in your oral testimony will be considered consent to publish it.

How Were Public Hearing Locations Chosen?

It was important to identify the right location and most convenient time for citizens to attend a public hearing. The Air Force considered several factors when choosing the locations.

- 1. We looked at the communities in the potentially affected environment; specifically, those areas adjacent to the base and underlying affected airspace. Then, within the communities, we chose facilities for the public hearings that we felt would be the most centrally located and accessible for citizens.
- 2. We read the comments received during scoping and paid attention to the comments at scoping meetings to learn where citizens live or recreate and what concerns they expressed in their comments. We looked at who would potentially be impacted by the proposed F-22 Operational Wing Beddown.
- 3. In Alaska, seasonal changes and migration of village populations were also taken into consideration when

determining the location, time, and place for the public hearings.





Public Hearing Dates, Times, and Locations

Idaho
May 15, Tuesday – Twin Falls
Doors Open – 6:30 pm
Air Force Presentation – 7:00 pm

College of Southern Idaho, Taylor Admin. Bldg., Rooms 276 & 277

Alaska May 14, Monday — Anchorage Doors Open— 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation— 7:00 pm

Elks Anchorage Lodge 717 W. 3rd Avenue May 15, Tuesday — Lime Village Doors Open — 10:00 am Air Force Presentation — 10:30 am Community Center

May 16, Wednesday – Duck Valley (Limited to Tribal Members Only) Doors Open – 10:00 am Air Force Presentation – 10:30 am Owyhee Human Development Center

May 16, Wednesday — Mountain Home Doors Open — 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation — 7:00 pm American Legion Hall 515 East 2nd South

May 17, Thursday – Boise Doors Open – 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation – 7:00 pm White Pine Elementary School 401 E. Linden

Florida
May 21, Monday – Panama City
Doors Open – 6:30 pm
Air Force Presentation – 7:00 pm
Gulf Coast Community College
Conference Ctr., 2nd Floor, Student Union
Bldg, 5230 W. Highway 98

May 22, Tuesday – Fort Walton Beach Doors Open – 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation – 7:00 pm UWF, Fort Walton Beach Campus/OWCC 1170 Martin Luther King, Blvd.

Virginia
May 24, Thursday — Hampton
Doors Open — 6:30 pm
Air Force Presentation — 7:00 pm
Thomas N elson Community College,
Moore Hall, 99 Thomas N elson Drive

May 29, Tuesday – Farmville Doors Open – 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation – 7:00 pm Train Station, 510 W. 3rd Street May 15, Tuesday — Slectmute Doors Open — 3:00 pm Air Force Presentation — 3:30 pm Jack Egnaty Sr. School

May 16, Wednesday — Galena Doors Open — 6:00 pm Air Force Presentation — 6:30 pm Galena School Library

May 17, Thursday — Fort Yukon Doors O pen — 6:00 pm Air Force Presentation — 6:30 pm Native Village of Fort Yukon

May 21, Monday – Central Doors Open – 6:00 pm Air Force Presentation – 6:30 pm Far North School Cafeteria

May 23, Wednesday — Delta Junction Doors Open — 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation — 7:00 pm Community Center 2288 Deborah Street

May 29, Tuesday — Wasilla Doors Open — 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation — 7:00 pm Best Western Lake Lucille 1300 W. Lake Lucille Dr.

May 30, Wednesday — Dillingham Doors Open — 6:00 pm Air Force Presentation — 6:30 pm City Council Chambers 141 Main Street May 16, Wednesday – McGrath Doors Open – 1:00 pm Air Force Presentation – 1:30 pm McGrath City Hall

May 17, Thursday — Chalkyitsik Doors Open — 1:00 pm Air Force Presentation — 1:30 pm Community Hall

May 21, Monday – Eagle Doors Open – 1:00 pm Air Force Presentation – 1:30 pm Eagle School Gym

May 22, Tuesday – Fairbanks Doors Open – 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation – 7:00 pm Copper Room, Princess Hotel 4477 Pikes Landing Road

May 24, Thursday — Talkeetna Doors Open — 6:30 pm Air Force Presentation — 7:00 pm Talkeetna Elementary School Mile 14, Talkeetna Spur Road (Main Street)

May 30, Wednesday – King Salmon Doors Open – 1:00 pm Air Force Presentation – 1:30 pm King Salmon Airbase Composite Facility, Building 703

What If You Can't Attend a Public Hearing?

We still want to hear from you. Written comments that are mailed to us are just as important as oral or written comments submitted at the public hearings. You can mail your comments to the address shown on page 4.



Where Can You Find a Copy of the Draft EIS?

If you want to review the Draft EIS but did not order your own copy, the list on this page shows the many locations that will have the document once it is completed and mailed. The Draft EIS will also be placed on the Air Force Air Combat Command Environmental Analysis web site: **www.cevp.com**

Alaska

Anchorage - Alaska Court System

Anchorage - Consortium Library, University of Alaska

Aniak Public Library

Arctic Village - Old Community Hall

Bethel - Kuskokwim Consortium Library

Chalkyitsik - Village Council Building

Circle Hot Springs Resort

Delta Community Public Library

Denali National Park Library

Dillingham Public Library

Eagle School Library

Fairbanks - Noel Wien Public Library

Fairbanks - Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska

Fort Yukon - Native Village Building

Glennallen - Copper Valley

Community Library

Juneau - Alaska State Library

McGrath Community School Library

North Pole Public Library

Palmer Public Library

Sleetmute School Library

Talkeetna Public Library

Tok Public Library

Venetie - Tribal Council Office

Wasilla Public Library

Florida

Bristol - Maxwell & Evelyn Harrell Memorial Library

Crestview - Robert L.F. Sikes Public Library

DeFuniak Springs - Walton County Library

Destin Public Library

Eglin AFB Library

Fort Walton Beach Library

Lynn Haven Public Library

Marianna - Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System

Mary Esther Public Library

Niceville Public Library

Niceville - Okaloosa-Walton Community College Library

Panama City - Bay County Public Library

Panama City - Gulf Coast Community College Library

Panama City Beach - Robert L. Young Public Library

Port St. Joe - Gulf County Public Library

Tallahassee - Florida State Library

Tallahassee - Florida State University

Tyndall AFB Library

Valparaiso Community Library

Idaho

Boise - Ada County Library

Boise - BLM Office

Boise - Idaho Legislative Library

Boise - Idaho State Library

Boise Public Library

Boise State University Library

Buhl Public Library

Burley Public Library

Twin Falls - BLM Office

Caldwell Public Library

East Owyhee County Library District

Fairfield - Camas County Library

Filer Public Library

Fort Hall - Shoshone-Bannock Library

Library

Glenns Ferry Public Library

Gooding Public Library

Hailey Public Library

Jerome Public Library

Kimberly Public Library

Kuna School Community Library

Marsing - Lizard Butte Library

Mountain Home AFB Library

Mountain Home Public Library

Rupert - Demary Memorial

Library

Shoshone - BLM Office

Shoshone District Library

Twin Falls - College of Southern

Idaho Library

Twin Falls Public Library

Nevada

Elko - BLM Office

Owyhee - Duck Valley

Reservation

Winnemucca - BLM Office

Winnemucca - Humbolt Library

Oregon

Burns - Harney County Library

Jordan Valley City Hall

Ontario - Malheur County Library

Salem - Oregon State Library

Vale Public Library

Virginia

Accomack - Eastern Shore Public Library

Amelia Courthouse - James L. Hamner Public Library

Burkeville Public Library

Cape Charles Library

Chincoteague Island Library

Crewe Town Library

Eggleston Public Library

Farmville Public Library

Hampden Sydney - Eggleston Library

Burkeville Public Library

Cape Charles Library

Chesapeake Public Library

Hampton Public Library and branches

Newport News Public Library and branches

Poquoson Public Library

York County Libraries

Virginia Beach Public Library

Williamsburg Public Library

North Carolina

Hatteras Library

Manteo - Dare County Library

Kill Devil Hills Library



Do You Have Any Questions?

If you would like additional information, please contact:

Headquarters Air Combat Command Public Affairs (HQ ACC/PA) (757) 764-5007



Be sure to visit Air Combat Command's Environmental Analysis website to view the Draft EIS, this newsletter, and other related materials at **www.cevp.com**

HQ ACC/CEVP 129 Andrews Street, Suite 102 Langley AFB, VA 23665-2769 Attn: Ms. Brenda Cook